CREATIVE IDEAS THROUGH BRAINSTORMING

Now there are some ideas!

What's Here…

- What is Brainstorming?
- Value?
- Main Points
- Get Ready
- The Procedure
- Action
- Additional Information
- That's all…

What is Brainstorming?

- Brainstorming is an interactive group process to develop, without criticism or judgment, IDEAS from all participants about a specific topic, focus, goal, problem, etc.
- Brainstorming is NOT a decision-making process – that comes after the brainstorming is finished and participant ideas and inputs are exhausted

Value?

Properly facilitated brainstorming will typically result in:

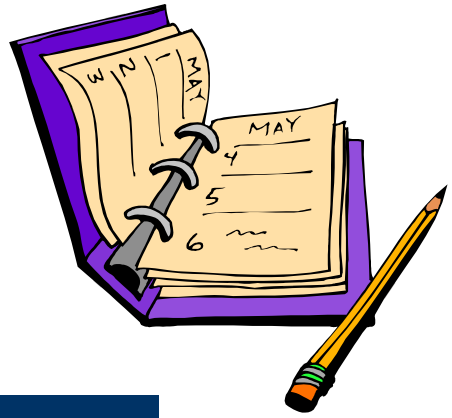
- Creative ideas that are generated WITHOUT criticism or judgment
- Increased involvement of meeting participants
- “Buy-in” of meeting participants
- A dynamic idea-generating/problem-solving process
- Application of the participant’s collective knowledge

Main Points

When facilitating a brainstorming session:

- Focus brainstorming on a specific goal
- Record ALL ideas presented on easel pad and post so all participants can see
- No discussion during the “brainstorming”
- No criticizing or evaluating others’ ideas – all ideas are valued
- Build on the ideas of other members (piggy-backing)
- Set and keep to a time limit
- Have fun -- keep the session relaxed

Get Ready, Page 1 of 4



Decide and schedule:

- Goal / focus (reason for brainstorming session)
- Participants
- Date
- Start time and stop times
- Location
- Supplies
- Amenities

Get Ready, Page 2 of 4

Notify attendees with what, when, where,
and why:

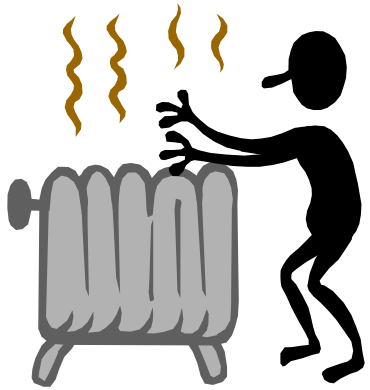
- E-mail
- Telephone call
- Memorandum
- Plan of the Day (POD)
- Letter

Get Ready, Page 3 of 4

Gather meeting materials:

- Easel and chart paper
- Markers
- Refreshments
- Pads and pencils for doodling
- Background material, if applicable

Get Ready, Page 4 of 4



Prepare meeting area:

- Arrange seating around a table or cluster of tables or in a horse shoe shape
- Ensure everyone will have a clear view of easel and chart paper
- Check environment (i.e., comfortable temperature; interruptions minimized; etc.)
- Post ground rules

Procedure, Page 1 of 6

Meet and greet:

- Be early and ready to greet participants
- Thank participants for coming
- Give short introduction explaining purpose and procedure
- Conduct introductions, if applicable
- Explain the ground rules – get agreement
  (see note page)
- Turn off cell phones, beepers, etc.

Procedure, Page 2 of 6

Start with an ice-breaker:

- Start the thinking process with a quick 3-minute brainstorming warm-up
- Demonstrate brainstorming with a subject like:
  - Alternative uses for old computers
  - Improvements to a regular coffee mug
  - Etc.

Procedure, Page 3 of 6

Begin Brainstorming:

- Explain focus of the brainstorming session
- Start with an idea of your own or one volunteered
- Write everything down as and when stated
- Keep it going -- ask for more ideas
- Suggest piggy-backs

Afloat activities:

Steel beach party
Bike races
Skeet shoots
Movie nights
Poker tourney
Millionaire club

Procedure, Page 4 of 6

Close and Summarize:

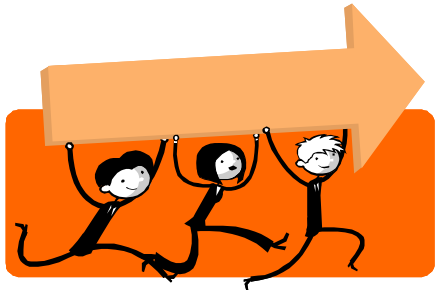
- Stop when ideas are exhausted
- Restate the ideas posted and consolidate similar ideas
- Ask if consolidation is accurate and acceptable and if anyone has any final input

Procedure, Page 5 of 6

Explain next steps:

- Additional brainstorming sessions
- Research into various ideas recorded
- A prioritization and decision process on each of the ideas:
  - R.A.W. Test ideas *(Realistic, Achievable and Worth Doing)*
  - Prioritize list of ideas
  - Edit and finalize list of ideas
- Implementation/action that will follow

Procedure, Page 6 of 6



Wrap and follow-up:

- Ask participants if you captured all the information before taking down flip charts
- Thank participants for their time and effort
- Clean and clear the area and re-set room as required
- Follow up with a “Thank you” note

Additional Information

- MWR Managers' desk reference, Duty 3.0, Develop and Execute Programs
- MWR/MCCS Essential Management Competencies (EMC), desk reference, Duty 2.0, Improve Performance
- The Team Handbook, Sholtes, Joiner Associates, Madison, WI, 1988
- Recreation Programming, Designing Leisure Experiences, Rossman, Sagamore Publishing, Champagne, IL, 1989

That’s all for now…

Brainstorming; Now, there’s some ideas!

Suggestions and requests to:

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